



NEWSRELEASE

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Theft at prison results in resignations, disciplinary action

Three Montana State Prison employees have resigned and four others face disciplinary action following an investigation into a report of theft of state property at the Deer Lodge prison.

Three workers in the prison's maintenance department resigned Thursday and Friday. The internal investigation determined they were directly involved in the incident. Four supervisors, who were not involved in the incident, will face disciplinary action for not adequately supervising and monitoring activity of employees. The action will range from oral reprimands to letters of reprimand.

The investigation found that a CD storage cabinet, built by inmate labor, was transported to the home of a prison employee. A prison vehicle was used to remove the item from the prison compound and then transferred to an employee's truck and taken to his residence. Warden Mike Mahoney said the investigation determined that all those accountable for the incident had been identified.

Mahoney said that, in compliance with state law, the legislative auditor's office and the attorney general's office have been notified of the apparent theft.

"This unfortunate incident casts a shadow over a dedicated and professional work force," Mahoney said. "This type of conduct cannot and will not be tolerated at Montana State Prison and we are committed to forcefully addressing these issues when they arise. These actions are contrary to the department's Code of Ethics and the expectations of all department employees."

He said an extensive review of internal controls has been undertaken and appropriate changes will be made in practices, procedures and safeguards to ensure this type of event will not happen again.

Department of Corrections investigators are working with Powell County Attorney Lewis Smith to determine if any legal action will be taken as a result of the investigation.